United Nations A/AC.154/383

General Assembly

Distr.: General
16 August 2007

Original: English

Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 10 August 2007 from the Minister-Counsellor for Host Country Affairs of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

I have the honour to transmit a note verbale dated 10 August 2007 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations in response to the latter's note verbale dated 20 July 2007 (see annex). I request that you circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

(*Signed*) Russell **Graham**
Minister-Counsellor for Host Country Affairs

07-48527 (E) 220807

Annex to the letter dated 10 August 2007 from the Minister-Counsellor for Host Country Affairs of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Note verbale dated 10 August 2007 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations

The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations and has the honour to refer a second time to the latter's note NV 5058 of 20 July 2007 concerning a motor vehicle incident, as the Permanent Mission of Cuba has asked that note NV 5058 be circulated as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

The United States Mission to the United Nations first responded in Diplomatic Note HC-74-07 of 23 July to the note in question, in which the United States Mission regretted the incident and requested additional information such as the licence plate number of the offending driver, if available, in order to assist with an investigation of the incident. To date, no such information has been received.

As this incident was a vehicle accident combined with the alleged assault, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations, like any other Mission, should have notified the New York Police Department immediately by calling the emergency number (911). Doing so immediately after the incident would likely have increased the chances of law enforcement assistance and/or a successful investigation.

There is nothing in the Permanent Mission of Cuba's note verbale that indicates that the perpetrator of the assault had noticed that the vehicle he reportedly struck bore diplomatic licence plates. It is not clear that the perpetrator would have necessarily recognized a diplomatic plate. Even if the perpetrator did recognize the plate, it is unlikely that he could have known the two-letter code for Cuba, which is not made public. The incident, therefore, appears not to have been directed against the Cuban Mission, and was not likely to have been knowingly directed against a member of the United Nations diplomatic community.

Vehicle accidents and associated assaults are not exclusive to New York City or the United States. When incidents of the kind reported in the Permanent Mission's note occur, the proper remedy is to immediately contact the police and provide as much information as possible that would assist in police intervention or an investigation. Based on the facts as presented in the Permanent Mission note, the United States Mission does not regard the incident of the vehicle accident and the accompanying assault allegation as a matter particularly appropriate for action by the United Nations Committee on Relations with the Host Country. Nonetheless, and even with the delayed notification of this unfortunate incident, the United States Mission will be pleased to request that the appropriate local authorities undertake an investigation into this incident if the Permanent Mission of Cuba is able to provide the additional information requested.